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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a family laboratory project designed to provide young children with opportunities to participate in learning experiences with babies, school age children, adolescents, adults who were single or married, parents and grand parents. A review of the literature focuses on the need for communication between children, parents, teachers and people of different ages. Descriptions of the family laboratory's communication procedures, group composition, evening social activities, field trips and schedule adjustments are given. Evaluation of the project was based on scheduled parent conferences, student teacher conferences and informal interviews and conversations with parents, teaching assistants, student teachers, fellow teachers and interested colleagues. Mid-year and end-of-the-year questionnaires were sent to participating families in order to determine their reaction to the total program and their involvement in it. While child attendance was high, parent participation did not meet desired levels. The results of the program are discussed with attention to possible effects the program may have had on its participants and suggestions are given for future projects. (Author/SB)

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DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD DEVELOPMENT FAMILY LABORATORY: AN EXPERIMENTAL PROJECT

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Loretta M. Hatfield

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Science

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ABSTRACT

Hatfield, Loretta M. M.S., Purdue University, December 1974. Development of a Child Development Family Laboratory: An Experimental Project.
Major Professor: Florence G. Kerckhoff.

In the fall of 1971, the Child Development Laboratories of the Child Development and Family Life Department at Purdue University added a new laboratory, The Family Laboratory, to its program. It enrolled families and individuals to represent the variety of ages and stages throughout the life cycle. Through supervised programming, opportunities were provided for young children to participate in activities and learning experiences with babies, school age children, adolescents, adults who were single, married, parents and grandparents. Equipment, room arrangement, structure and schedules were modified to accommodate the different age levels and interest groups.

Evaluation of the project was based upon scheduled parent conferences, student teacher conferences and informal interviews and conversations with parents, teaching assistants, student teachers, fellow teachers, and interested colleagues. Mid-year and end-of-the-year questionnaires were sent to participating families in

order to determine their reaction to the total program, and their involvement in it.

The rational for the creation of such a program came from diverse sources such as the 1970 White House Conference on Children, Erik Erikson, The 1966 United States Policies Commission Report, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Vance Packard, Rubin and Kirkendall, Annie Butler and Time.

INTRODUCTION

The Child Development Laboratories of the Child Development and Family Life Department at Purdue University were designed to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to learn about the growth, development, and behavior of young children between the ages of birth and five years. These laboratories, while serving both research and service purposes, were designed primarily to provide observation and participation with young children by students seeking professional careers in a variety of early childhood educational settings. In the fall of 1971, a new laboratory, the Family Laboratory, was added to these programs. It enrolled families and individuals representing a variety of ages and stages throughout the life cycle from infancy through older adulthood (Kerckhoff, 1971).

The rationalization for the creation of a program of this nature comes from diverse sources.

1930 White House Conference on Children:

> We must change our national way of life so that children are no longer isolated from the rest of society. We call upon all our institutions --public and private--to initiate and expand programs that will bring adults back into the lives of children and children back into the lives of adults (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

Erik Erikson:

. . . I can think of life as progressively unfolding, with its directions essentially fixed in the first few years by what happens between the child and his parents (Coles, 1970).

1970 White House Conference on Children:

People together, the young and the old, relating to one another, giving and taking, working and building together is the story of the human family. . . (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

Catherine E. Grissom:

. . . we have been guilty of trying to work with the child without including the family. We have tried to know him without knowing his mother, father, siblings, grandparents (Grissom, 1971).

The 1966 United States Policies Commission Report:

. . . experience indicates that exposure to a wide variety of activities and of social and mental interactions with children and adults greatly enhance a child's ability to learn (Van der Eyken, 1967).

Laurence K. Frank:

Perhaps the most difficult learning confronting the child is concerned with his interpersonal relations, with adults, and especially with other children, younger and older (Frank, 1968).

Leonard S. Kenworthy:

. . . children need to be exposed early to the wide variety of people in our country. Their lives can be enriched by such confrontation with others (Kenworthy, 1968).

And, finally,

1970 White House Conference on Children:

It is primarily through observing, playing, and working with others older and younger than himself that a child discovers both what he

> can do and who he can become, that he develops both his ability and his identity. And it is primarily through exposure and interaction with adults and children of different ages that a child acquires new interests and skills, and learns the meaning of tolerance, cooperation, and compassion (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

The Family Laboratory was planned specifically to provide opportunities for young children to participate in activities and learning experiences with babies, school age children, adolescents, adults who are single, married, parents, and grandparents.

> It's natural for people of all ages to be together, they should be together and when they are brought together even in the cold world of deadlines. . . it's a pleasant enjoyable experience--and really 'no big thing.' It's only a 'big thing' if we don't do it . . . (Peters, 1971).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature directly related to a project such as The Family Laboratory is apparently, at the time of this writing, nonexistent. The writer has, therefore, chosen to select supportive evidence from related topics: namely, Some Basic Needs of Children and Parents, Communication, Parent Involvement, Fathers and their Role in the Lives of Young Children, as well as Mixed Age Grouping, and to pursue these subjects individually as they pertain to this project.

Some Basic Needs of Children and Parents

The living pattern of society in America today tends to order people on the basis of race, ethnic origins, socioeconomics and age. Children seldom encounter those different from themselves and their immediate family (Frazier, 1968). Sadly enough, meaningful encounters with members of their own family may even be extremely limited. Erik H. Erikson is quoted as stating that he sees many of us as "belittling the very real efforts of our children tc stand alongside us . . . (Coles, 1970)." In a speech delivered to The Child Care Conference of the National Organization of Women in 1971, Thomas R. Peters

cites a phrase of Professor Urie Bronfenbrenner " . . . children in America today are systematically programmed out of the lives of adults . . . children and families come last in this country (Peters, 1971)." In certain primitive cultures youngsters work side by side with their mothers and fathers, becoming their allies and companions, while maintaining their role as children. Erikson continues, "In contrast, what we often do is give our children a lavish make-believe world whose absurd irrelevance they easily detect (Coles, 1970)." A wide variety of societal forces has contributed to this stratification of its members and at the same time Alexander Frazier, editor of Early Childhood Education Today, contends that because the young child has been removed from a direct contact with basic life processes he is being denied the range of phenomena which would permit him a natural opportunity to gain understanding of the world in which he must live (Frazier, 1968). It is through work and play with other children, through games and projects, in shared responsibilities with parents, adults, and other children, younger and older, that a child develops skills, motives and qualities of character that will enable him to live a life that is gratifying both to himself and those around him (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

It is undeniable that the family itself is a very vital and important part of the life experience of any individual and the relationships a child has within the family affects the way he reacts to people throughout his life (Worth, 1972). Hochstein reports in an interview with child psychiatrist Robert Coles: "Middle-class children who are ignored or treated mechanically develop the same feelings and desolation that poor children experience. And anger follows (Hochstein, 1973)." "There is evidence that the so-called 'generation gap' is enhanced by lack of opportunities for individuals of different ages to be together at the same time in the same place (Kerckhoff, 1971)" The child is not an empty slate on which adults make one permanent mark after another, bad or good. But individual development is an extremely complex process hence it cannot be denied that the kind of relationships a child has within the family structure is crucial. Clark E. Vincent describes the middle-class parents has having been "indoctrinated with the notion that unless they are obtuse, evil, or stupid it is possible to rear the perfect child (Vincent, 1972)." This kind of pressure on parents results in feelings of guilt for their failure to meet unrealistic expectations.

> If we accept the psychological dictum that the frightened or insecure child needs not less but more emotional support, understanding, and love, and if parents are people too, then it

> should be readily apparent that the parents of today need not less but more support, encouragement, and self-confidence (Vincent, 1972).

Similarly, it can be concluded that the child's dependency is only half of the story of human relatedness and need (Coles, 1970). The decrease in the number of extended families has practically eliminated multiple mothering and has placed a tremendous burden on the mother as the primary and often the only adult truly responsible for the child (Frazier, 1968). Dr. Philip G. Zimbardo, Stanford University research psychologist, stresses the "need to recapture our dwindling sense of community." Marriage counselor Dr. Paul Popenoe traces marital problems to "social vagrancy, high mobility, and lack of family ties." The impact of this uprooting of American families is further emphasized by anthropologist Margaret Mead's findings that the probability that a woman will suffer depression after childbirth is directly proportional to the distance from female relatives or friends. We talk of our "Affluent Society" and our "Free Society" but in reality we are the "Cold Society." Lack of membership in a group produces a lonely man who will in turn bring up children with a lowered social capacity says George Nomans, Harvard sociologist (Packard, 1972).

Erik H. Erikson proclaims ". . . we have within us not only what we are but what we were and what we hope

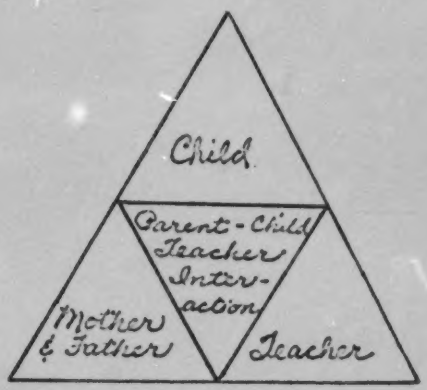
to be or fear becoming (Coles, 1970)." And all of this affects not only the life of one person but the lives of each with whom he has contact with those who are most affected being the members of his immediate family. Security within the family is certainly a primary need (Hoffman, 1966) and unless we make an effort to change today's world where parents are pressured by a society which does not allow time or place for active involvement of adults and children together (Bronfenbrenner, 1970) then we need to be prepared to deal with the problems this kind of society creates.

Communication

Teachers of young children notably gather together all sorts of tools, scraps of wood and other interesting odds and ends to provide the youngsters with materials to build. James L. Hymes, Jr. speaks of teachers themselves building--building bridges to span the gap that has developed between home and school (Madera, 1969). A basic construction material for this sort of bridge building task is communication for it is "the key to building understanding, trust and mutual helpfulness (Otto, 1969)" between the two most important institutions in the young child's life.

Through communication the teacher can provide valuable help to parents in understanding their child and in

improving relations with the child (Todd & Heffernan, 1964) but in order to have this kind of insight requires knowing the child and to know the child one must know his family. "A teacher cannot understand a child's behavior until he learns the parent's attitude (Weaver, 1968)" and she/he is not dealing with a group of identically endowed receptors (Gue, 1969) but unique combinations of individuals which can perhaps be best illustrated by a modification of Catherine Chillman's "Parent-Teacher-Child Triangle Cluster" (Chillman, 1971).



Clearly, for each family there is a separate triangle which must fit into the whole which is the classroom. The challenge this conglomeration affords the teacher is unquestionable and consequently, admitting the priority of the teacher-child interaction, the one-to-one communication between teacher and parent is often neglected. This is unfortunate for skillful communication with parents is potentially as important as that with the children themselves (Frederick, 1969).

The parent seeks from the teacher information for which he has no other source--a reliable picture of the child as he comes to grips with the expectations of the school and how he functions in a setting with his peers (Quill, 1969). Parents deserve reassurance and help from this influential stranger who plays such an important role in the social, emotional, and intellectual development of their offspring (Quill, 1969). Usually parents' attitudes are positive and they pose the questions that accompany their desire for good up-to-date programs (Otto, 1969). After all, they do have a financial investment in the school (Holmes, 1969) but at the same time they have much more than dollars to give to the school. Their knowledge of the child is often invaluable in providing the teacher with insight and consequent direction (Quill, 1969). In the December 1971 issue of Childhood Education, one finds an article by David P. Weikart entitled "Learning through Parents: Lessons for Teachers," where he perdicts that ". . . if the teacher will be patient, the mother will teach her how to proceed (Weikart, 1971)."

The benefits of reciprocal communication are many.

> Parental interest in the preschool group and pleasant home conversation about what goes on at school are indispensible factors in a happy experience for children (Todd & Heffernan, 1964).

> Parents delight in hearing the enjoyable details regarding achievements, interests, difficulties and perplexities which their child might not think to relate (Weaver, 1968).
>
> For the degree to which we teachers use pupil and parent clues to develop a program and to adapt our role to meet the individual's needs, to that extent the child profits . . . and we can conclude that to that extent teachers and parents profit too (Jackson, 1969).

Acknowledging the need for parents and teachers to meet on the bridge of communication for the good of children, as was so aptly suggested by Hymes (Madena, 1969), one must then explore the means to best facilitate this goal. Webster defines communication as "intercourse by words, letters, or messages; interchange of thoughts and opinions." Although brief, this definition seems to offer much diversity in creative methods of "keeping in touch." There are interviews which are natural, easy-talking-together times between teacher and parent (Weaver, 1968) as opposed to conferences which are planned and scheduled. In a report on the Infant School in New Rochelle, New York, the staff suggests some form of frequent reporting as well as a lending library of current books on childhood education for the parent's use (Grade Teacher, 1969). "Still another good technique--a very simple one, not used nearly as commonly as it should be--is a Teacher's Newsletter, a weekly or bi-weekly report to parents. A teachers' 'State of the

Union' message but more frequently (Hymes, 1968)." Gue also cites the newsletter as a meaningful vehicle to convey information to parents. Many contacts may be simply a word in the hall or at the classroom door, a hastily scribbled note or the printing of the child's story about his picture or painting (Frederick, 1969). Wall suggests that ". . . good feelings are most likely to thrive and grow when there are frequent face-to-face contacts (Wall, 1968)." Other possible avenues are bulletin boards, observations, participation, telephone conferences and parent meetings. Although the traditional school-based meeting can still be an effective tool, rapidly gaining in popularity is the home visit (Gue, 1969). Nothing demonstrates more clearly the school's acknowledgment that the home is, in fact, an important learning environment than teachers visiting the home (Conant, 1971). Parents who have received reassurance that the school is sincerely interested in partnership, who have enjoyed casual and friendly contacts through notes, brief meetings, newsletters, telephone conversations and parent meetings, etc., turn naturally to the teaching staff for consultation when the need arises (Quill, 1969).

The parent conference is a tool par excellence in communication with parents (Grisson, 1971) but one which requires a great deal of skill on the part of the teacher.

Jenkins advises that parents bring their individuality to the parent conference and that ". . . until the teacher knows the parents as individuals and is sensitive to and willing to accept their individuality, then it will be difficult to establish any clear communication between them (Jenkins, 1969). Even then meaningful dialogue needs to be cultivated in a pleasant atmosphere where the teacher is not viewed as an authority figure (Quill, 1969). A parent's ready acquiescence may be only a polite, external veneer, masking a real lack of communication between teacher and parents (Jenkins, 1969).

"Communication becomes a soliloquy if teachers assume that they are to be 'The Great Dispensers' or 'The Major Dispensers" of the pertinent, up-to-date information (Jackson, 1969)." A well received technique is one in which the teacher approaches the parent with the question, "What can we do?" Implied here is that a successful interview or conference requires something other than a monologue. The teacher should, in fact, be prepared to do a great deal of listening during the conference to encourage observations of the child by the parent (Frederick, 1969). "More can be learned from one parent conference than from hours of classroom observation. But we need to listen beyond words (Grissom, 1971)."

"Mark Twain once said, 'The difference between the just right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightening and the lightening bug' (Headley, 1969)." Neith Headley advances that the just right un-spoken word and the almost right unspoken word is equally divergent. Observing young children can do a great deal to teach us about the impact of this so-called "silent communication" which reaches far beyond the spoken word. Watch the reaction of a preschooler as he walks through the classroom door. The effect of the unspoken greeting reveals itself. A warm smile or simply a nod of recognition from the teacher makes the child feel positive about himself. A glare or no greeting at all leaves him feeling small and insignificant (Headley, 1969). A child lacks the equipment and experience necessary to form an accurate picture of himself, so his only guide is the reactions of others to him and he passively accepts these judgments which are communicated by words, gestures, and deeds. These self attitudes, learned early in his life, are carried with him forever (Harris, 1970). The effect of facial expressions and sincerity are further characterized by these quotes of children:

Child to teacher: "Why do you smile all the time? Everything ain't so funny."

> And another child: "Mother, don't do that! Smile real, not toy."
>
> (Headley, 1969)

Erik Berne observed that as you watch people you can see them change before your eyes through facial expressions and gestures. An example he used was the father whose face turns to stone in response to his son's disagreement with his opinion (Harris, 1970).

We need to expand our existing techniques as well as directing imagination and creative energy toward new channels of communication between parents and the classroom (Gue, 1969) and work diligently to develop a constant awareness of the effect we are having, consciously or unconsciously, on others.

Parent Involvement

Annie L. Butler reports in her review of recent research in early childhood education that ". . . more attention must be paid to the values to be derived through parent involvement in early childhood education (Butler, 1971)." In support of this view one finds that practically all of the experimental programs include parental involvement (Butler, 1971). In his discussion of the importance of parental attitudes in relation to sex education, Lester Kirkendall (1971) points out the ineffectiveness of educating children apart from adults and it is

the author's opinion that this ineffectiveness extends beyond the area of sex education to include education in its broader sense.

Neither the school nor the child development center can accomplish alone what the school and parents can do together as a team; one supplementing the other, one backing up the other, both working in the same direction (Hymes, 1969). Reports of success from various programs of this nature such as the Mother's Training Program at the University of Illinois, Parent and Child Centers, the Office of Education Day Care Center in Washington, D.C., and the Bereiter-Englemann experiment are appearing in recent literature. Hymes (1968) reiterates that bringing the parents into the classroom as program aides and participants is an excellent approach. Others too believe in the premise that parents belong in the classroom and this conviction is being reinforced by the inclusion of parent involvement as a "mandatory ingredient of Federal Head Start Programs (Unger, 1968)."

Parents play a very important role in Head Start and consequently they feel that they have a real stake in both the program and the center. Too many schools go their own way, settling for one badly attended parent meeting a month as the full extent of their home-school relationships (Hymes, 1969). Contrarily, from the California State Board of Education Task Force on Early

Childhood Education comes the request for a master plan to be submitted by each local school district in order to meet the needs of the children to be served in which parents must be included [Italics mine]. The California plan will offer individualization, with parents, volunteers, aides, and older students working under the direction of the teacher. This group stresses that their ideas are not new but they believe the time has come to stop talking and start doing (Riles, 1972). Executive director of the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., Joseph H. Reid, describes a congressional bill being introduced by Rep. Brademus in which there would be ". . . specialized social services designed to . . . involve parents in the child's development, . . . direct participation in development, conduct and overall program direction by parents . . . [and] participation in activities designed to assist parents in meeting their family responsibilities (Reid, 1970)."

From the point of view of parent education, it is indeed desirable to provide opportunity for parents to participate in the preschool groups their children attend. Through experience in the classroom parents can receive insights into teaching methods and techniques such as the effectiveness of a whispered request or that offering minimal help encourages the child toward self-help (Todd & Heffernan, 1964). In the field of art

misguided adults often hinder the production of what the individual child feels and believes is his own by encouraging the copying of models or the following of a set pattern (Frank, 1968). Parents in the classroom are able to observe with the teacher's guidance how children resolve problems and perplexities through the manipulation of play materials. One of the most salient features of the Ford Foundation Demonstration and Research Nursery Program in New York City (1962-65) was the participation for parents which it was felt helped make both the teachers and the parents more aware of the individual child's needs and deficiencies (Feldmann, 1966). A very concrete reality problem in parent teacher communication is the lack of an opportune time for verbal exchanges before or after school or at a crowded parent night whereas the presence of the parent in the classroom provided both relevant observations and shared comments which, if necessary, can be elaborated at a later scheduled conference. Wilson cites involvement as "the key to successful communication between school and home (Wilson, 1969)" and it can serve as well as a key to real parent education.

Recent research is supportive of the enthusiasm being generated for parent involvement. If one accepts the significance of the parent as a model it follows that ". . . any appreciable enduring change made in the child

can be affected only through an appreciable enduring change in the persons most intimately associated with the child on a day-to-day basis. This research supplies the basis for the involvement of parents in many early childhood programs (Butler, 1971)."

There has also been an increasing awareness of the role of the parent in the child's education as shown by the Hess et al. (1970) analysis of parental involvement in early education. The educational role played by parents is being re-assessed and, clearly, there is a linkage between the nature of the parent/child interaction and certain aspects of the child's intellectual development (Schaefer, 1972).

> The accumulating evidence suggests that parents have great influence upon the behavior of their children, particularly intellectual and academic achievement, and that programs which teach parents skills in educating their children are effective . . . for preschool education (Schaefer, 1972).

In 1964 Douglas completed a longitudinal study of ability and educational attainment using approximately 5000 children born in 1946 in England, Scotland and Wales. To determine the influence of the home vs. the school he measured parental interest by the frequency of visits. The variation in the children's test scores revealed a higher relevance to the variation in degree of parent interest than variation in the quality of the school

(Schaefer, 1972). In the book Children Come First (American Heritage Press, 1971) written by Casey and Lisa Murrow, a young American husband and wife team who visited forty primary schools in England during 1969-1970, there is also a pertinent comparative analysis of the role of parental involvement in children's learning (Cohen, 1971).

Sometimes a child is forced to live in two separate worlds: the world of home and the world of school. Fortunately, in many communities this dichotomy is disappearing because home and school, teacher and parent, are working together (Berson, 1959). Since the young child is still extremely dependent on his home and family perhaps it is unrealistic to think of his education apart from his parents (Pitcher et al., 1966) and the potentialities of parents should be nurtured by the school as the dynamic and important assets which they are (Wall, 1968). Mrs. Alberta Loftin, director of the Bereiter-Engelmann program in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn says that in their experience ". . . involving the parents is good for the children and good for the school . . . it gives everybody a stake in the learning program and helps assure that our work is responsive to real needs (Bereiter-Engelmann, 1969)." This shift in attitudes toward the home/school relationship promises that better rapport is in the making.

The problem facing the administration or teacher once it is agreed that the program will solicit or at least welcome parent involvement is that of implementation. It is unusual to find a totally disinterested parent (Pitcher et al., 1966) but it is extremely important that once involved in the program the parents are made to feel that their views are important and that they have something to contribute (Holmes, 1969). The teacher might find it helpful to take a parent survey early in the school year to reveal possible talents the parents might have to share (Frederick, 1969). Dorothy Baruch, as early as 1939, wrote on the subject of parent participants. Her ideas included the writing of a monthly bulletin, taking movie pictures, equipment repair, making doll clothes as well as planning and arranging transportation for field trips (Baruch, 1939). Maury School in Richmond, Virginia, cites examples from their experiences with parent involvement: bringing live pets to the classroom, fixing a discarded steering wheel to a box for an "automobile," bringing a pumpkin to help the children make a jack-o'lantern, helping with fieldtrips, and organizing picnics (Wall, 1968). Fun and personal involvement can add extra benefits to a pot luck dinner at school with movie or group games, an evening Halloween masquerade program, a spring playground cookout or a family art night (Wilson, 1969). Each year

the Poway Unified School District in California expands their parent participation and then ask themselves reflectively why they waited so long to do so. Parents have become so much a part of the program that they are not simply adjuncts but, rather, vital ingredients (Nielson, 1968).

"When parents have been given useful roles in the school, their contributions have added to the knowledge of the teachers; thus, programs can be geared more to the needs of children (Grissom, 1971)." Parent participation also gives children an opportunity to

> . . . see their parents in new and positive roles, gaining tangible evidence of their parents' interest in them and their school--they receive more individual attention--and see two of the most important adults in their lives working together for them (Conant, 1971).

Fathers and their Role in the Lives of Young Children

> So accustomed are we to seeing the mother as the key person in a child's life that the father has often been neglected, if not ignored, by the school (Grissom, 1971).

A guidebook written by Cynthia Stokes Brown and Louise C. Brown further emphasizes this point. The title: Choosing the Best Preschool for your Child: A Mother's Primer. Women's lib leader Betty Friedan adamantly purports that mothers, working or otherwise,

should not have to spend all her time taking care of the children (Daycare, 1970). This idea of separation of roles has been with us for so long that one notes with agreement the point that ". . . though a wife and mother is known as a housewife . . . there is no such word, and there should be, to describe the father's role in the home (Weeks, 1971)." Child psychiatrist Robert Coles, author of Children of Crisis, sees the function of a father as being the same as for a mother--"a little more blurring of the roles would be all to the good (Hochstein, 1973)." One father who is at home while his wife works admits discovering many clues about how to handle his sons which have been very useful but mostly he is appreciative of the closeness and understanding that has grown since caring for his children.

Rubin and Kirkendall, editors of Sex in the Childhood Years, writes:

> The early years of childhood are clearly critical years for establishing gender role and for developing those attitudes and responses which are essential for sexual functions in later years (Rubin & Kirkendall, 1970).

Thirty-six fifth graders in an upper-middle-class school were asked: What does it mean to be a father? Their answers sadly confirmed that being a father meant "Making good money and getting a good job . . . Going to work every morning. Coming home with a headache." This

survey was included in a new book entitled Family Matters by Dr. Laurence H. Fuchs. He further claims that the father's role has deteriorated in this country (Levin, 1972). It would seem, however, that children and ". . . women are the victims of men's abdication from responsibility (Hochstein, 1973)." In our society economic success has become a full-time job (Hochstein, 1973). Meanwhile, the young child who has contact with only his mother and other mother figures for most of his day is in fact missing many enriching, stimulating contacts (Kendall, 1972).

Many children have never seen their fathers on the job and, even more unfortunately, many could not begin to describe what it is that their father does when he disappears to "work" each day. "A child with an absent father, or a non-participating father, is less able to grow up feeling that he can deal with the working world (Hochstein, 1973)." A new book written for preschoolers and first graders tries to remove some of the mystery out of daddies. For example, it tells what they do when they leave for work, what hobbies they like and how infinitely many kinds of dads there are in the world (The Daddy Book by Robert Stewart, American Heritage Press).

Noting those deficiencies ". . . it seems particularly appropriate to place young children in situations where they may relate to adults of both sexes (Kendall, 1972)." In addition to having men on the teaching staff,

a preschool center can encourage fathers or community resource agents to come in and share their particular skills or occupations with the class. A maximum effort should be made by the school to have fathers observe and participate according to their interests, ability, availability, and suitability for the type of school involved.

Altogether too often the father is involved solely in paying the tuition and approving or disapproving the progress reports (Todd & Heffernan, 1964). The dignity of fatherhood needs to be regained. Children need exposure to men just as they need to be with grandparent figures, high school and junior high students, adults and children of all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds (Kendall, 1972).

Mixed Age Grouping

Urie Bronfenbrenner charges that schools breed alienation. The child from a nuclear family is sent to a nuclear school where he is essentially cut off from the outside world (Bronfenbrenner, 1972), settled throughout his formative years in our educational institutions among replicas of himself until he reaches adulthood. This form of isolation creates a false barrier which ignores the premise "children need people in order to become human (Bronfenbrenner, 1972)."

> Child-rearing is something a child can't do for himself. He needs interaction with adults and children of different ages if he is to learn tolerance, cooperation, compassion (Bronfenbrenner, 1972). [Italics mine]

By far, most examples of programs incorporating multi-age levels within a group are those like Bank Street Children's Center in New York City where two or three age groups are found in one classroom. Of their twelve classes in 1969, nine contained children from two age groups and the other three had children from three different age groups each (Demonstration School, 1969). The Eveline Low and Malting House Schools in England report evidence from their experiences that young children derive a stimulus and, as their confidence grows, a sense of friendship from the older children in their groups some of whom might be their brothers and sisters (Van der Eyken, 1967). It was the drop-out problem in the suburban New York schools that prompted the establishment there of infant schools patterned after those in England. The age range was from five to ten years and children were grouped both by age and in mixed age groups (The Infant School, 1969). Montessori's method consisted of having children from ages three to six years together. J. McVicker Hunt speculates that ". . . taking into account the epigenesis of intellectual development, such a scheme has the advantage of providing

the younger children with a wide variety of models for imitation. Moreover, it supplies the older children with an opportunity to help and teach the younger . . . helping and teaching contain many of their own rewards (Hechinger, 1966)." In the Soviet Union classes "adopt" other classes. For example, a third grade group might adopt a kindergarten class and escort them to and from school, read to them, help them with lessons or play with them (Bronfenbrenner, 1972).

When Judge Mary Conway Kohler's studies took her to Europe she observed that adolescents there had an opportunity to participate in society at a much earlier age than is generally witnessed in the United States. When she returned it became obvious to her that schools and families are no longer filling the needs of our children. They are not provided with opportunities to be with adults and grasp the satisfaction of work. Our complex society with its emphasis on independence does not give adolescents a chance to help out. They aren't being asked to care for younger children or elderly grandparents and these needs are just going unmet (NCRY). "We need to ask how it is that the young become adults (Coleman)." Judge Kohler persuaded some educators, sociologists and businessmen of her concern and the result was the formation of the National Commission on Resources for Youth (NCRY). NCRY's newest project is

directed at preparing teen-agers to be parents by combining high school courses in parenting along with involvement in local day-care centers (NCRY). In a like manner, Frederick C. Green, M.D., Associate Chief of the Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development, tells us that their department has launched a new nationwide program called Education for Parenthood. One of its major objectives is to provide a combined curriculum of classroom instruction with practical experience in neighborhood day-care centers and kindergartens. This course will be tested in 200 public schools during the 1973-74 school year (Education for Parenthood). In addition to combating America's one-sided emphasis on youth (Vincent, 1972) programs such as these offer benefits to all involved. Society needs the energy of these young people (NCRY) and these young people need society.

In the Soviet Union youth and adult meet at the shop, factory or business. Groups of children and often whole classes are adopted by the workers and are invited to visit them on the job, see them at work, talk to them about their jobs and their lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1972).

Grace M. Iacolucci of the Milwaukee Public Schools presents her plea for adult interaction with youth in a novel way:

WANTED

Another pair of helping hands, two kindly watchful eyes and listening ears, enveloped by one willing spirit with an understanding heart. No special training needed, but all talents will be utilized. Ability to give encouragement helpful. Eager parents and interested relatives may apply. Hours flexible; satisfaction guaranteed. Recompense: involvement, renewal, life meaning, love (Iacolucci, 1968).

In her report on a demonstration project with infants and toddlers at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, Mary Elizabeth Keister observes that they would like to "innovate" more than they have at present in ways to involve the babies' parents and grandparents in the life of the nursery center. They would also like to explore more fully the opportunities for learning and social development in a mix of age levels in a group. There must be ways to be more creative in this area if intelligent efforts would be focused in that direction (Keister, 1970).

One of the more recent truly innovative programs comes from Fairhaven College in Bellingham, Washington. This new project is a federally supported experiment in multi-generational living called "the Bridge." There thirty-three adults aged 60 to 80 pay modest fees to live on campus in a dormitory which also houses a day-care center for preschoolers. In addition to auditing classes on campus and attending lectures and concerts, the oldsters are also helping out in the day-care center

and providing valuable guidance and perspective for their young campus neighbors (White-Hair College, 1974). Archibald MacLeish is quoted in the International Herald Tribune (February 4, 1974):

> We live, in fact, in what might be called an Age of Adolescence. And such an age, to borrow Yeats' poignant phrase in 'Sailing to Byzantium' is 'no country for old men.' Old women either (MacLeish, 1974).

It is true that we no longer live in Confucian China or Homeric Greece where an old man respected his years because mankind thought youth was beautiful but what really mattered was living--knowing how to live--and the old man who had lived the longest was assumed to know the most (MacLeish, 1974) but programs like the one at Fairhaven College show us that perhaps one can still look forward to a productive life after sixty.

And . . .

so it was in an exploratory mood that we set forth on this experimental project, The Family Laboratory, seeking to meet, in some small way, the basic needs of children and parents, to make an attempt to bridge the communication gap between home and school through various means including parent involvement with special emphasis on the need for the participation of fathers and other male figures, and to examine the proposed benefits to be derived from multi-aged grouping at the preschool level.

PROCEDURE

Group Composition

The Family Laboratory Experimental Project (FLEP) enrolled a core group of fifteen families for fall semester, 1971. Included in this core group were infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers, school-age children, teenagers, parents and, in a few instances, grandparents. (See Appendix B for age distribution of infants through early teens.) As physically handicapped children are not excluded from the Child Development Laboratories (approval is required from a pediatrician) one family was enrolled whose handicapped child was a member of the core group. The families, generally a middle to high socio-economic group, included the following variety of occupations: business administration, engineering, F.B.I., construction, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, ministry, pre-school and elementary teaching, university counseling, accounting, the military, graduate students in chemistry, physics and agriculture economics and professors in the areas of mathematics, forestry, agriculture and business.

Orientation

The FLEP program was designed to promote the overall growth of each individual participant rather than directed to stress any one specific area of growth such as cognitive, social, physical or emotional. The intention was to facilitate the development of the total being and his ability to function among the members of a family unit or its facsimile. Details of the general structure and purpose of the program were given to the parents by the director of the Child Development Laboratories prior to their enrollment. Parents were notified of their acceptance in the Child Development Laboratories and, more specifically, in the Family Laboratory in June, 1971. (See Appendix C.) In early September, 1971, letters were sent to the experiment participants detailing the agenda of the first meeting with them, the parents. (See Appendix D.)

Of first importance during this meeting was the opportunity for everyone to become acquainted and for the teachers to establish a climate for free exchange of ideas and input into the direction the program might take. For example, thoughts were exchanged as to how and when to include the toddlers in the activities considering that many still required an afternoon nap. Regarding their own involvement, a sheet was circulated

asking parents to indicate how they felt they could contribute to the program through personal participation. (See Appendix E.) They were reassured that no particular talent was required and that they need not feel any pressure to come prepared to do an activity. Parents were also told about the new equipment which had been purchased expressly to meet the needs of this unique group: table games, volleyball and badmitten equipment, an infant diaper changing table, and a park bench and picnic table for the playground. Finally, the experimental nature of the project was discussed noting that it was structured to incorporate flexibility and change and that parents' comments and criticisms were not only welcomed but sought.

Communication

The need for an unincumbered flow of communication was approached from various avenues. At least one individual conference was held with one or both parents from each family unit sometime during the year. Most generally these were scheduled at mid-year after the teacher had an opportunity to observe and know the child and his family but early enough to permit time to profit from the exchanged observations of the child and the program. Several student teachers made brief home visits either in the afternoon or evening when both child(ren) and

parent(s) could be present. In the months of March, April and May, newsletters were prepared and sent home with each family. These included news of field trips, comments from the children, introductions to new group members, recipes from the potluck, dates of upcoming events and the creation of a lending library. (See Appendices F, G, H.) In May a group discussion was held on effective guidance and discipline techniques for parents and teachers of preschool children. For specific reactions to the project itself questionnaires were sent to the families at mid-year during the interruption of classes between semesters and again at the end of the academic year. (See Appendices I, J.) Most communication took place "face à face" in the classroom or on the playground when parents were participating, as they lingered after arrival or returned early for departure, or as they spent a few moments in the observation booth. When concerns or comments could not easily be shared during a brief conversation or through a note sent home with the child a time was set aside after school hours to meet with the parents or contact was made by telephone.

Participation

The periods of participation by parents provided frequent opportunities for communication and although this is not and was not a substitute for the parent

conference it provided an ideal situation for sharing observations or examples of behavior to be noted or discussed in depth at a later time. At the beginning of the FLEP communication among parents was facilitated by a coffee area where parents could sit and chat yet still be on the fringe of activity. This served a second purpose by placing the parents in a strategic position to observe the routine and techniques and to synthesize their potential role and relationship within the group.

Intent to participate was normally indicated on a sign-up sheet which was posted in the childrens' locker room. This did not, however, mean that parents and grandparents who had not signed the sheet in advance were not welcomed. Many stayed voluntarily when they saw that a staff member was absent for the day or that a particular project needed a few extra hands. Parents desiring to do a special project usually cleared a time with the teachers in advance so it could be incorporated into the activities schedule for the day. Examples of the types of projects proposed and carried out by parents were photography, both movies and still shots, water play, equipment repairs, bringing in a home-grown pumpkin to be made into a jack-o'lantern, Halloween masks, baking, dying of eggs for Easter, and the sharing of many pets. The scheduling and handling of the participation of infants, toddlers, school age children and teens was necessarily approached in a different manner.

The infants and toddlers in the FLEP were scheduled to participate on different days of the week to accommodate the observation needs of university students enrolled in infant development courses. As a result, the infants came on Monday and Wednesday while the toddlers were present on Tuesday. A great deal of special planning and intensive supervision was required on the days the toddlers were present in order to provide for their short attention span and high mobility.

As anticipated, the involvement of school age children and teen-agers was more difficult because habitually they are in school during the hours of the FLEP. However, on six occasions when the laboratory was open the public schools were not in session and at these times it was possible to include these ages in the program. Although some special equipment had been purchased with this age group in mind, they seemed to prefer participation in the activities set up for the core group and serving the role of teacher helpers by putting names on art work, refilling paint cups, cleaning up after activities, helping with wraps for outdoor play, pushing the younger children on the swings and other tasks of that nature. In addition to these afternoon participations this group was also present for the family evening social events.

Evening Social Activities

The first evening social activity of the year was a potluck dinner held in mid-November. Each family unit was asked to bring a covered dish casserole, cake, or relishes of eight servings. Beverages, rolls and table service were provided. Tables and chairs, nursery school size and adult, were set up in the classroom and arranged to exemplify the pan age characteristic of the Project. The food was served buffet-style. The children made placemats for the tables as one of their art projects for the day.

The second in the series of evening programs was intended for parents only and was planned and executed by the student teachers. The theme was "Creatives for Parents." There were four art centers each featuring a different type of creative activity where the parents were invited to experiment, receive instruction, obtain recipes and, finally, to display their talents on a bulletin board for their children and others to see. Refreshments were served.

The third evening meeting was an open discussion on effective guidance and discipline techniques for parents and teachers of preschool children. This topic was selected, as was the evening of creative activities, on the basis of the results obtained from a mid-year

questionnaire which asked parents to select options based on sex education, guidance and discipline, creative activities, working mothers, racial awareness or other suggestions. (See Appendix K.)

A family barbecue picnic was the final event of the year and this was held on the nursery school playground. Participating families provided and shared food and the means to prepare it. The Project supplied beverages and dessert. Volleyball and badmitten were available for before and after dinner activity and documentary movies of the group taken by one of the parents were shown.

Fieldtrips

Whereas during the fall semester first-hand experiences were brought to the laboratory, in the second term this technique was supplemented by fieldtrips of a diversified nature. These included a visit to the Purdue University Dairy Farm, a local pet store, a private farm to see a newborn lamb (which was later brought to the FLEP playground for a visit), a "Moon Walk" to the Purdue Horticulture Park to gather rock samples, a nature walk in Happy Hollow Park and a trip to the Purdue University Poultry Farm as a part of a study unit on chickens. The latter was followed by a food experience science project with scrambled eggs. On one occasion a

small number of the older children in the core group were invited to participate in a city bus trip to downtown Lafayette with the other Child Development Laboratory afternoon group. The final fieldtrip of the year was a variation of the usual home visit. In this case the children were taken by a university bus to visit the dormitory room of a student teacher and the home of one of the teachers. One impression such a visit was designed to serve was to correct the child's frequent image that the teachers and staff live at school. This misconception was further clarified by the inclusion of FLEP teachers and staff in all aspects of the program whenever possible.

Schedule Adjustments, Changes and Additions

Throughout the year schedule adjustments, changes and additions were made to facilitate and meet various needs with the goal of improving the overall operation of the program. One such change involved the age/readiness separation of the children for short periods of time to permit more advanced manipulative activities, work with numbers and color games for those ready and interested. The most drastic change was the removal of the infants to the former infant laboratory at the end of the first semester of the FLEP's operation. This was necessary after it became increasingly clear that the

university students in infant development were unable to meet their observation needs and requirements in the FLEP environment. However, infants were "borrowed" from time to time during the second term and, because of its proximity to the FLEP quarters, siblings were permitted to visit the infant lab regularly. One result of this change was a frequency reduction of parents with infants participating in the laboratory as well as the removal of one of the two teachers for two out of the three sessions per week. Compensation for this staff/help reduction was made by the addition of two graduate teaching assistants and an early childhood education student from Norway. Routine scheduling created an increase of the number of student teachers in the FLEP for Spring 1972, to five.

During the second semester a lending libaray was created for the education and interest of the FLEP adult population including parents, grandparents, staff and students. Fifty-eight pieces of literature were made available for circulation in the form of books, paperbacks, pamphlets and portfolios. Subjects ranged from creative activities, science experiences, discipline, parent effectiveness, menus for young children, children's book catalogues, child behavior manuals by leading experts in the field and sex education material for both parents and children. These materials were placed

on a book rack in the entrance hall for before, during and after school browsing. All items were available for check out.

EVALUATION

Because this project was not intended to be empirical research the evaluation of the Family Laboratory Experimental Project is based subjectively on the professional observations of the teachers and the lay opinions of parents and other participants taken from written questionnaires and personal interviews both formal and informal. Other parameters of measure used are attendance records of children in the core group, attendance of all participants at evening social events and frequency of participation by parents, grandparents, school age and teenage siblings. A summary statement of these parameters and the evaluation of the program by the writer are placed at the end of this section.

Core Group Attendance Records

Attendance records for the core group of fifteen pupils during the fall semester indicate that of a total of 660 pupil-day possible attendances there were 584 recorded. This denotes seventy-six absences for the period or an absenteeism rate of 11.5%. During the second semester the total possible was 656 with sixty-four absences or 592 core children in attendance throughout the

period. The rate of absenteeism was 9.6%. For the year there were 140 absences out of 1,316 possible attendances or an overall absence rate of 10.6%. According to the school nurse who maintains these records this is a low rate of absenteeism for this age level. A detailed breakdown of time periods and causes for non-attendance can be found in Appendices L and M.

Attendance at Evening Social Events

Attendance at the orientation meeting and the social events throughout the year are shown in Table 1. With a total number in attendance of 181 out of a possible 254 the attendance record for all evening events is 71.2%.

Frequency of Participation

In this third measure, frequency of participation, some allowance for inaccuracy should be considered in the total figures for there were numerous occasions when parents stayed spontaneously for less than the full session without signing the posted attendance schedule. For the thirty-six class meetings of the first semester there were fifty recorded participations. Of this number seven were fathers, two were grandmothers, one was a grandfather, ten were school age and teens and thirty were mothers. During the second semester there were

Table 1

Evening Attendance Breakdown

Event	No.Att.	Total Possible	Fam.Rep.
Orientation	28	32 (Parents & Staff)	13/14
Potluck	49	69 (Families & Staff)	10/15
Creatives for Parents	17	35 (Parents & Staff)	7/15
Guidance & Discipline Discussion	17	35 (Parents & Staff)	7/15
Barbecue Picnic	70	83 (Families & Staff)	14/15

forty-five sessions with a total of forty-seven participations. This total was comprised of twenty-nine participations by mothers, two by fathers, three by grandmothers and thirteen by school age and teen age siblings. For the year ninety-seven participations were recorded for the eighty-one sessions of the FLEP. It is noted that participation dropped from 1.38% for the first semester to 1.04% for the second term. One could speculate that the increase in staff numbers and the removal of the infants were significant factors in this reduction.

Questionnaires

A fourth evaluative tool is the questionnaires which were sent to the parents at mid-year and at the end of the project. The mid-year questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first dealt with the structure of the group; the second, participation. Ten out of fourteen families responded to the mid-year questionnaire. Types of responses have been synthesized for each question (Table 2). The original questionnaire and cover letter may be found in Appendix I.

The end of the year questionnaire was composed of twelve multiple choice questions and two essay questions. The responses to the essay questions will be discussed

Table 2

Mid-Year Questionnaire with Synthesized Responses

Group

1. QUESTION: What are your reactions to the age range?

Responses	No. Resp.
...Good for younger children	1
...Not good for younger children	1
...Good for older children	0
...Not good for older children	2
...Good (no qualifications)	5
...Too wide an age range	3

2. QUESTION: Did you find the group size agreeable or disagreeable?

Responses	No. Resp.
...Agreeable	9
...Agreeable (with qualifications)	3
...Disagreeable (too large)	1

3. QUESTION: How do you view the inclusion of older children?

Responses	No. Resp.
...More needed	1
...Good as it is	5
...Impractical	1
...Indifferent	1
...Question misinterpreted	3

4. QUESTION: Is the 2:00 to 4:15 hour good or bad for you, your child?

Responses	No. Resp.
...Good	3
...Bad (no recommendation)	1
...Too late	6
...Prefer a.m.	1

Table 2 (cont'd)

Participation

1. QUESTION: What is your reaction to the amoung of parent involvement?

Responses	No. Resp.
...More needed	2
...Good as it is	5
...See no value	1
...Schedule does not permit participation	1
...No response	1

2. QUESTION: Was the experience profitable:

Responses		No. Resp.
...For you (the parent)	YES	6
	NO	2
...For your child	YES	6
	NO	1
...For the group	YES	1
	NO	1
...No response		1

3. QUESTION: Should the parent participation be required?

Responses	No. Resp.
...YES	3
...Possibly	1
...NO	6

in the author's summary. The questionnaire was completed by thirteen of the fifteen families enrolled in the program. Their responses to the multiple choice items are represented in Table 3. The complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix J.

Conferences and Informal Conversations

Various aspects of the program were evaluated during the course of the year by means of regular student teacher conferences, scheduled parent conferences and informal conversations with student teachers, graduate teaching assistants, parents, fellow teachers and interested colleagues.

From the student teachers came comments and criticisms both in conferences and conversations relating primarily to their ability to function effectively in the FLEP environment. Several reported at the end of their FLEP experience that they had embarked on their student teaching assignment in the Family Laboratory with apprehension and a lack of self-confidence. This they attributed partially to the uncertainties of and lack of preparation in dealing so closely with parents. An example of this was noted in the behavior of a large number of the student teachers during the first few sessions of their student teaching experience. The students would quickly absent themselves when it appeared

Table 3

Responses to End of the Year Questionnaire

Question	Highly Favorable	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	Did Not Attend	No Response
1. Family invol. in FLEP	8	3	1	1	-	-
2. Inclusion of ages 6-14	2	6	2	1	-	2
3. Babies move to Inf. Lab	4	2	2	3	-	2
4. Toddler Tues.	4	3	3	-	-	3
5. Lending Lib.	9	4	-	-	-	-
6. General Curriculum	3	9	-	-	-	1
7. Field trips	11	2	-	-	-	-
8. Newsletters	10	3	-	-	-	-
9. Creative Night	3	4	-	-	5	1
10. Guid. & Disc. Discussion	2	4	-	-	6	1
11. Fall Potluck	7	2	-	-	2	2
12. Cookout	8	2	-	-	2	1

that it was going to be necessary to offer guidance or discipline to a child whose parent(s) were present. Although this is not in itself a unique observation of a beginning student teacher (there are often parents in the observation booth at the Child Development Laboratories) the rapidity at which this phenomenon disappeared in the FLEP setting appeared significant. Most student teachers reported very positive feelings about parent relationships at the end of their FLEP experience and noted the contribution the close parent family contacts provided for them in their understanding and ability to deal with the children in the core group.

Each student teacher was required soon after the beginning of her FLEP assignment to select two children from the core group for close observation. The student took notes on these children, recorded their strengths, weaknesses, favorite activities, special playmates, their social adjustment within the group, how they resolved conflicts, their general temperament and ability to care for their own basic needs. These observations were shared and discussed with the teaching staff. When possible the student was invited to observe and/or participate in the parent conference of the children she had chosen to observe. In a few instances the student teachers also made informal home visits of a social rather than conference nature with one or both of their selected families.

A general consensus among the student teacher group as a whole was that the presence of the toddlers one day per week afforded them a significant challenge for planning and supervision. One student expressed concern not only at this but that a FLEP student teaching assignment in general required more time and planning than might another placement. At the final conference she reported that although she found the time and effort required to be a worthwhile investment and the FLEP experience to have been profitable she would not want to be assigned to teach in a similar set of circumstances.

Undeniably this is not a classroom situation that has equal appeal for all teachers. However, with the growing trend toward open classrooms where teachers are dealing with two or more age levels at the same time and the increasing interest of parents in how their tuition or school tax dollars are being invested toward meeting the educational needs of their children, one might want to explore the advantages and profits to be gleaned from a more comprehensive student teaching experience with mixed ages and frequent parent contact such as could be found in the Family Laboratory.

The graduate teaching assistants reported, as did the student teachers, that the presence of the parents/grandparents was a new and, at times, difficult adjustment for them. Until it became clear that their role

did not change because other members of the families were in attendance they found the guidance of a child whose parent was present to be delicate. Through discussion it was pointed out that the use of effective guidance techniques by the staff in the presence of the parents is in fact another form of parent education. In support of this observation several parents remarked that they had been able to see how it is much more effective, for example, to tell a child what he can do rather than what he cannot do. A sample would be: "You can come down the slide feet first on your bottom, your back or your tummy." rather than "Don't walk up the slide! Don't come down head first! You can't come down on your knees!"

Time was regularly spent after each session to discuss among the staff, student teachers, graduate teaching assistants and other interested colleagues the proceedings and problems of the day. Ideas were shared, techniques reviewed, solutions suggested, schedule rearrangements discussed and the plan for the next day reviewed. Most of those involved in these reflection/planning times agreed that they were valuable and their regularity essential.

The parents were in an advantaged position to observe closely and critically the development of the program for they could be present in the classroom without

the administrative or supervisory responsibilities of the staff or student teachers. Their comments and reactions are discussed by age groupings: infants and toddlers, core group, school age and teens, parents and grandparents.

Regarding the youngest members of the FLEP it was suggested by two parents that the presence of babies and toddlers required too much adult attention and was generally disruptive. It might be well to note that one was the parent of an only child and that neither had a baby or toddler in the group. Another felt that during the first semester the number of staff was inadequate to deal with demands of infants and toddlers in addition to the core group. (As mentioned earlier this was remedied by additional staff and student teachers for the second semester.) The parents of the babies and toddlers were unanimous in their positive reactions to the advantages their youngsters seemed to derive from a mixed age setting.

The feedback on the core group was frequently directed at the seemingly disproportionate number of benefits for the younger members of a mixed age group as opposed to the older segment or, in this case, those four years and above. One parent expressed that in her opinion it was virtually impossible to stimulate the older children to their full potential while meeting the needs

of the younger ones. Even though the removal of the babies to the Infant Laboratory at the end of the first semester was regretful it did release adult time for core group needs on those two days per week when they would normally have been present. A real effort was made by the staff and student teachers as a result of the above commentaries to guard against planning activities geared at less than the capabilities of the individual members of the group. As mentioned earlier the group was separated on occasion to permit specialized readiness programming.

The involvement of school age children and teenagers was, by necessity, limited. There was some discussion with the parents about the possibility of occasionally changing the program hours in order to permit greater participation by this age element but the idea was dismissed as impractical. Their presence was well received when they were available for participation and parents seemed to feel that, as often with themselves, they were there as often as schedules would permit.

During their parent conference one enthusiastic couple commended the program and said that they felt its potential could be even greater if more of the parents were willing to give more time and effort toward its development. Most parents did not share this point of view. It was often remarked, nevertheless, that the

opportunity to see one's child in a new environment and how he relates to others was enlightening. One mother of a young three year old stated that she found her child reassured by her presence and felt that her participation aided an early adjustment to his first school experience. By contrast, another mother remarked that she didn't need participation . . . she gets her fill of parent/child relationships at home. Several parents cited shared school experiences as increasing compatability with their children. Parents also reiterated the advantages of knowing their childrens' school mates and becoming acquainted with other parents and the teaching staff. Interesting to note is the fact that those parents who participated the most in the program were those who had more positive attitudes about its value and potential.

The presence of grandparents or their age equivalent was most favorably received. Most of the comments in this regard were in expressing disappointment that the participation of this age element was not more frequent. The high mobility of the residents of a university community or almost any community in recent years seriously reduces the number of extended families for a project such as this to draw from. The group had one set of natural grandparents living in the community, one grandmother who participated while visiting her family

and one "borrowed" grandmother. The latter's children lived far away and she enjoyed the opportunity of coming with friends who were enrolled in the FLEP. This type of participant offers the greatest potential of untapped resources to supply a simulated grandparent population.

Observations and Conclusions

The foregoing sections have treated without comment and interpretation the various parameters of subjective measure provided by parents and other participants in the FLEP. In this section an attempt is made to collate these responses and to evaluate the predominant response trends in terms of the project director's insights and professional values as she conceived the intent and purpose of the FLEP.

Questionnaires

Included in the mid-year questionnaire was an interest survey that sought to elicit topics about which the parents would be interested in learning more during a non-school afternoon or an evening session. (See Appendix K.) Parents were requested to react to the following selected topics by indicating a high, medium or low level of interest: sex education, guidance and discipline, creative activities, working mothers, racial

awareness. They were also asked to suggest other topics for consideration. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

	High	Med.	Low
Sex Education	2	6	2
Guidance and Discipline	9	4	0
Creative Activities	7	4	1
Working Mothers	3	4	4
Racial Awareness	1	5	4

There were two additional suggestions: relations between family members--sibling rivalry, mother-son, father-daughter and early learning, reinforcement techniques, following directions.

Guidance and discipline received the highest degree of interest with nine placing it at the highest level and four at medium. The two added suggestions were indirectly related to that general topic as well. Although creative activities, the second ranked favorite topic, could be effectively presented at any time during the school year in retrospect it was unfortunate

that a guidance and discipline session was not held early in the year soon after the project began. Although the parents were able to observe positive guidance techniques and effective discipline measures throughout the year, a preliminary schooling in discipline theory followed occasionally by informal refresher discussions and on-the-spot identification of specifically noted techniques perhaps would have helped the parents to assimilate more thoroughly an understanding of the theory and practice of effective disciplinary procedures. An interesting adjunct might be a warm-up panel of parents from the diverse cultures which are so often present in a university laboratory pre-school to discuss child rearing practices in their native cultures.

Question number four on the mid-year questionnaire asked if the hours of 2:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. were agreeable for the parents and their children. Only three out of eleven responding reacted positively to the question with six reporting that the hours were too late. One indicated a preference for a morning session and one stated that the time was not good but the person reacting thus failed to offer an alternative. Some reasons cited by parents for desiring the change were that the 2:00 hour allows time for a rest but not a full nap, the 4:15 departure is too late and more tiring for the children, 2:00 is too long to wait after lunch for school

to start, 4:15 is too late to play with neighborhood children, 2-4:15 breaks up the whole afternoon and makes it difficult to schedule for younger and older siblings. Although it was impossible to make an immediate change in the program hours the Child Development Laboratories were able to adjust the times of the afternoon sessions beginning with the following fall semester. The meeting times were 1:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The second item under parent participation on the same questionnaire asks if the experience of participating was a profitable one. The synthesized responses can be found under Question Two in Table 2. The majority of the replies to this item were favorable toward the experience both for the parents and children. The only suggested value for the group as a whole was the additional pair of hands it provided. The range of responses on the value to the parent and child was more extensive but nevertheless disappointing in the lack of insight they demonstrated into such factors as the real purpose and goals anticipated for this type of interaction. Paraphrased samples of typical responses are:

A. I was unable to participate but my husband did go once and found the experience quite profitable.

B. Yes, profitable for mother. Father unable to participate.

C. Yes, for me. I became acquainted with the teachers and the other children. I don't know about the child; I think so.

D. Yes, for me. But I participated fairly often (to look after toddlers) and it may have been too often for my "regular group" [core group] child who needs more experience with peers and perhaps less with me and other adults.

E. Very definitely the experience was profitable for my child.

F. Our 2 year old loved it. I don't think I gained anything personally and I don't think my husband did.

G. Our toddler enjoyed the intellectual & social stimulation. I would have liked it more if more parents had joined in with my enthusiasm.

H. Personally, I don't see any value. Normally children receive plenty of parent involvement at home and it's good for them to get away from these relationships occasionally. They tend to cling to their own parents so I can't see much value to the group as a whole. And the parent tends to supervise, direct, help & discipline her own child as at home. As a parent I get all the child relationship at home that I need or want.

I. Yes, for myself and our children especially the younger ones who are reassured to see me there at least part of the time.

Had Question Two asked "why" or "how" was the experience profitable or not profitable these answers might have been more insightful. An attempt to word the questions so as to elicit responses more along the lines of the goals set for the project would have given the responders more clear guidelines in completing the questionnaire.

Response H (and F as well) are such that one is provoked to assume a position and take issue. Admittedly, the positive potential of any interaction fades rapidly when a member enters into the circumstances with a negative attitude toward its value. It is virtually

impossible, however, to have a void social experience unless one is blind, deaf and is able to isolate himself from physical contact with the other members of the group. The untrained lay person is not expected to be able to specify and identify the types and values of all the interactions he encounters in a pre-school setting or otherwise for that matter but this does not preclude their occurring or that he cannot profit from that which has no name for him. The classroom provides an opportunity for parents to see their child(ren) in a new environment. Without labeling it as such they can note the difference in social achievement between the child who resolves conflicts with words and the one who uses fists, feet or tears. Perhaps these parents do believe that their child(ren) receive adequate parental involvement at home but if the attitude is such that they feel that they get all the child relationship at home that they want or need then the question of quantity vs quality of those relationships must be raised. Few parents would presume to know all there is to know about child development and negate the possibility that something could be gained through a new shared experience with their child.

If one truly believes that "more attention must be paid to the value to be derived through parent involvement in early childhood education" (Butler, 1971)

then the question must be asked if parent participation should be a requirement. Out of ten responses to this item in the mid-year FLEP questionnaire three were in favor of requiring participation, one said possibly and six answered negatively. Some additional accompanying comments were:

> ...it would be difficult to require participation of parents who work.
>
> ...fathers should participate more because children are normally at home all day with their mothers.
>
> ...participating once or twice a semester would suffice.
>
> ...shall we say encouraged?
>
> ...Yes--that's the only way to get the group going in the direction we desire--a full family project and a close feeling of working, playing, interacting and love together--really a security to all of us.
>
> ...No!--I feel that for some it would cease to be a joy.

The composite of these remarks reflects the conflict experienced by the writer as well. Parents were enrolled in the program with a full understanding that their participation was an integral part of the project. The choice was up to them and their acceptance was understood as an acknowledgment of that commitment. Participation was therefore left on a voluntary basis so that parents could work it into their schedules at their

convenience. Records of the frequency of participation of parents and grandparents show that the highest number for one family for one semester was six participations. Two families enrolled for one semester each did not participate at all. The highest total number of participations by parents and grandparents of one family for the year was ten followed by two families who each had participated eight times during the year. Considering the entire program consisted of eighty-one sessions, the average number of participations per family (5.28) seems to reflect a relatively low response to a program commitment.

The format of the questionnaire used at the end of the year was practical in that it was possible to tabulate the results and perceive a relatively clear overview of the program as defined by the questionnaire items. The responses signaling the value of the FLEP were as follows: 45.5% highly favorable; 28.8% favorable. There were no neutral or unfavorable reactions to either the curriculum items (general curriculum, field trips, newsletters) or the parent/family activities (lending library, creative night, guidance and discipline discussion, fall potluck, and barbecue cookout).

At the end of the questionnaire the parents were asked to comment on how they felt all family members

could have been more beneficially involved. Six of the fifteen families responded to this item and the consensus was that they felt that the amount of involvement was good and/or adequate as it was although three indicated that they would have preferred to be more involved but work schedules and other commitments would not permit. One suggested mother's coffees as an additional means of involvement and another added that her husband might have enjoyed a fieldtrip if he had been able to arrange his schedule differently.

Item 14 on the questionnaire asked for further comments, pro or con, on the multiple choice questionnaire items or other related topics. The disparate responses ranged from praise for the program and its benefits, the significant losses for the four year old in a mixed age setting as opposed to the advantages their presence provides for the two year olds, criticism toward the presence of too many adults (in contrast to the comments from the mid-year questionnaire), to enjoyment of family nights and meeting and talking with so many of the parents. Of particular interest was the following commentary:

> My preschool children show interest in old people. We have no contact with any elderly people which I feel may be a common thing. Is there some way a child's curiosity about getting old, what it is like to be old, etc., etc., etc. could be given an opportunity to see and learn? The concept of a family is incomplete without people of all ages.

Participation

In the mid-year questionnaire one parent expressed the opinion that in a participation program the child tends to cling to their own parent and the parent is inclined to supervise, direct, help and discipline their own child. The question is asked "Does parent participation usurp the authority of the teacher?" It is suggested that ideally it is always the teacher who assumes the responsibility for the child and the curriculum but the more skillful she is the better she will be able to blend the parents and their contributions into the substance of the program (Berson, 1959). The primary problem facing a project which enrolls families is how to comfortably and effectively involve the individual family members into a program which is primarily designed for a core group of preschool children.

A laissez faire approach to the participation of the extraneous family members or those outside of the core group could easily lead to frustration. The teacher cannot assume that her expectations will be realized without some form of direction. Although it was not done for the FLEP it is recommended that sometime during the orientation meeting the parents be conducted on a tour of the facilities and then encouraged to explore in depth the cabinets and storage rooms. It would have been easier for the parents to function initially

if they had been familiar with the location and arrangement of materials and equipment.

As mentioned earlier a coffee area was arranged for the participating adults during the initial weeks of the program. While providing them with a place to sit, observe and talk with other participants, they were also encouraged to move about the room during free play and to join the children for science activities, music, storytime, etc. It is believed that this approach provided for their gradual inclusion in the activities. Since interest would quickly wane for exclusively fringe involvement the coffee area per se was disbanded after a time. Coffee continued to be available for those desiring it.

The parent-suggested list of ways they felt they could participate (Appendix E) provided a key to the potentials of this particular group. The exploitation of the list was left to the parents with only mild suggestions or quiries from the staff. In retrospect it is suspected that the teaching staff needed to be more aggressive but without pressure in seeking fuller participation. Reluctance to become more actively involved may have been a result of shyness or not knowing whether their contribution was honestly needed or desired.

Some supplementary suggestions for productive involvement might include capitalizing on participant interest in fieldtrips for the preparation of an up-to-date community resource file as recommended by James Hymes Jr. This could incorporate not only fieldtrips but resource people and the location of appropriate books, slides, films and filmstrips. Not all interactions need to focus on the core preschooler and, if interest or need was indicated, an after-school tutorial program could be arranged on the premices for the school age and teenage participants patterned after the National Commission on Resources for Youth (NCRY) program "Youth Tutoring Youth." They theorize that the relationship helps the tutor as well as the tutored. In addition, several parents expressed interest in the people who observed the FLEP as well as the research projects being conducted by graduate students in the Child Development and Family Life Department which frequently utilized the children in the core group. It could have been beneficial to both to have had joint sessions with parents, professors and their students to discuss what was being observed and the nature of the research.

It is possible to obtain multi-faceted advantages from an extended family project or endeavor. The so-called "generation gap" serves as a source of frustration and exasperation to the older generation but in reality

it is youth that has the most to lose. The lack of communication created by this barrier all but eliminates education for adulthood and responsible citizenry. This project has proposed that this gap is enhanced by a lack of opportunities for individuals of different ages to be together in meaningful contact.

The chance to see one's child in a mixed age setting provides an observable continuum of the developmental processes which can provide guidelines for more realistic behavior and skill expectations. Seeing the differences in the finger dexterity of a four year old vs a five year old might delay the insistance from a parent that their child try to learn to tie his own shoes before he has the necessary skills for the task. Parents in the classroom should be able to understand their own child(ren) better as well as the process of education. Being informed they could better understand, supplement and support the program. While enriching the class with their skills they are wittingly or unwittingly involved in the process of parent education. This in turn serves to make both mother and father more effective parents and teachers away from school. The positive effects that may spill over to other members of the family due to this experience are described by Susan Gray (Childhood Education, December, 1971) as "vertical diffusion."

The least explored and one of the more promising aspects of the FLEP is the inclusion of older adults in preschool education. A quote from "Medicine Today" by Dr. David Zimmerman reads:

> The passivity that characterizes many older people is not a normal part of aging. Neither is it due primarily to physical infirmity, says World Health Organization gerontologist Dr. Claude Balier of Paris. Usually, he says, it is 'a sign of chronic minor depression,' and it can be corrected by bringing aged persons back into the mainstream of everyday life.

The desire to approximate an extended family group need not stop with the enrolled families and their social contacts as it did in the FLEP. The earlier cited parent quote from the end of the year questionnaire concerning their child's interest in and lack of contact with older adults points to a unmet need which can in turn neet a need of the older generation, the troisième âge.

Educators strive to be aware of the individual differences in children when thinking of and planning their curriculum but seldom is this awareness applied in contacts with the families of these same children. One is more likely to plan and think of them as a singular group labeled "the parents" (Jenkins, 1969). In a program such as The Family Laboratory Experimental Project participation acts as a facilitator to reduce such generalizations and clear the way for genuine two-way

communication and productive liaisons with implications for all of those immediately involved; enrolled families, student teachers, staff and interested volunteers.

Teacher Training

The Child Development Laboratories of the Child Development and Family Life Department ". . . are designed primarily to provide observation and participation with young children by students who will seek professional careers as teachers in a variety of early childhood settings (Kerckhoff, 1971)."

The potentials of a student teaching experience in a setting like the Family Laboratory are numerous in their applicability for other teaching positions. For example, public and private schools, kindergartens, cooperative nursery schools, Free schools, commercial, community and private Day Care and Head Start or other government programs.

In a December, 1971, article by Margaret Conant published in Childhood Education she suggests that many teachers respond with trepidation to parents' requests for involvement. With the growing enthusiasm for parent aide programs in public schools and the popularity of parent cooperative ventures it appears that teacher training institutions need to up-date their preparatory requirements to include more than a basic parent education

course which includes no practicum. Teachers and student teachers need preparatory and refresher training in the dynamics of parent-teacher communication coupled with experience to develop competence, quiet self-confidence, empathy and supportive acceptance (Quill, 1969).

What does the student teacher stand to gain from a student teaching experience that combines a multiplicity of age elements in one educational setting? The director of the Child Development Laboratories cites of specific importance the opportunity to observe the scope of the developmental process in one setting "where he came from" and "where he will go (Kerckhoff, 1971)." One FLEP student teacher remarked that for practically as long as she could remember she had spent most of her time in the company of peers. She had rarely been around babies or very young children. Her grandparents lived in another state and visits were infrequent. Although of limited duration, the FLEP experience offers an exposure and direct contact with varied ages for the student. It can provide a basis for the synthesis of developmental, social, maturational, intellectual and physical processes and skills. Students can learn first hand and by good example how different children are and how one can respond to and capitalize on these differences.

One parent commented that she didn't believe it was valuable for student teachers or observers to see parents and children interacting in an artificial setting. What then connotates a real setting? Can one assume that parents and children are only themselves when behind the closed doors and shuttered windows of their own home? If the parents scream and hit their children at home but not in public the relationship is affected nonetheless and what the student is seeing is a result of the composite relationship which is real.

High schools across the nation are beginning to recognize the need and formulate programs to prepare youth for the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. Often these programs include practical experiences with young children. These students are being placed in nursery schools, kindergarters and day care programs. For many years the Ohio State University Laboratory School operated an extracurricular program where pupils from kindergarten through senior high school selected activities on the basis of interest. The result was kindergarteners chopping apples while someone in junior high rolled out the pie dough. A first grader's wobbling attempts at cutting a linoleum block for a printing project were assisted by the firm hand of a sophomore. A senior shows a 6th grader how to clean oil paint from a brush and store it properly. Tutorial programs are

utilizing the talents of both adults and youth. Parents are coming to school as co-teachers in parent cooperatives, as teacher aides, and resource people for specialized teaching units. Today's teachers need to be trained, prepared, experienced, and skilled to meet these demands.

Participation in any form, be it school age children, teenagers, parents, grandparents or other interested parties, requires a teacher who is flexible and willing to leave the comfort of her traditional homogeneous classroom behind. The Montessori classroom has been described as a business-like atmosphere enshrouded in silence or hushed whispers where children are so engrossed in their individualized activity that they rarely socialize with their neighbors. A mixed age classroom cannot thus be described. But if a teacher can function effectively and thrive in the midst of often loud and profusely social but profitable multi-aged interactions then she stands to gain in the establishment of an open and supportive relationship with parents and, indeed, the entire family. A close family-school relationship can serve to strengthen both.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is believed that the replication of this project using control and experimental groupings properly measured for distinguishing features and outcomes has the potential of providing significant information which could serve to strengthen the position that a mixed age preschool program with extended family involvement and participation has a relevant role to play in the development of new trends of early childhood education.

Four questions emerge from the FLEP which might be considered for scientific measurement. The first is whether or not participating in a project which includes a handicapped child and his family changes or modifies the predisposed attitudes of other parents and/or children toward the handicapped. Secondly, can parent interest be measured by frequency of participation and, if so, what are the effects on the child's performance? A third question is whether or not a mixed age setting reduces the level of achievement for the older members of the group and, finally, what differences can be determined in the achievement level of the younger members of a mixed age group as opposed to a homogeneous grouping?

The weaknesses of the project as it was carried out were: (1) the limited number of participations by siblings, fathers, grandparents and older adults, (2) the removal of the infants to the Infant Laboratory at the end of the first semester, (3) the conflict of interest created by the need for student teachers to have a prescribed number of classroom experiences during their student teaching assignment while fulfilling the desire to involve parents to the fullest extent possible, (4) the format of the mid-year and end of the year questionnaires, and (5) the imbalance of age distributions in the core group.

The strengths of the program appeared to lie in the following areas: (1) the presence of a male graduate teaching assistant during the second semester which compensated somewhat for the limited participation of fathers, (2) the curriculum, (3) the evening social events, and (4) the inclusion of a family with a handicapped child.

If the project is replicated it is recommended that the five points which follow be given serious consideration. An effort should be made to enroll a balance of ages in the core group, and if this is not possible, that the balance be weighted at the older age level rather than the younger. Secondly, it is suggested that one or two babies be enrolled exclusively for the

purposes of the project rather than adjuncts of another group with separate goals and purposes. It is highly recommended, thirdly, that professional guidance be sought in the preparation of any questionnaires to assure that the responses are in answer to the desired information. Because of the adult participation it is important that the number of student teachers be kept low. One or two at any given time would suffice. Finally, it is advised that all possible avenues be explored to increase the participation of siblings, fathers, grandparents or other interested parties in order to simulate an extended family.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Jean Piaget, when asked to summarize his life's researches on the development of young children, put it this way:

> The more a child has seen and heard, the more he wants to see and hear (Vander Eyken, 1969).

The writer proposes that trends in preschool and early childhood education are changing and should continue to change in a direction that focuses not only on the child, but on his parents, his brothers and sisters, his extended family and his community. We must not only accept the child where he is but seek to know where he came from and where he is going. Erik Erikson reminds us that:

> . . . children are going somewhere, and know it, even in the beginning of life. They are headed, for instance, toward others, with whom new bonds can be established (Coles, 1970).

Steps need to be taken to bring children out of our peer isolated educational systems into an ongoing laboratory of life where he can make meaningful contacts that promote human understanding.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Masters Project Proposal

Submitted by Loretta M. Hatfield

Department of Child Development and Family Life
Purdue University
December, 1972

Title: Development of a Child Development Family Laboratory: An Experimental Project

Committee: Florence G. Kerckhoff, Chairman
Wallace Denton
Agnes Schenkman

Background and Purpose

> We must change our national way of life so that children are no longer isolated from the rest of society. We call upon all our institutions--public and private--to initiate and expand programs that bring adults back into the lives of children and children back into the lives of adults (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

The Child Development Laboratories of the Child Development and Family Life Department at Purdue University were designed to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to learn about the growth, development, and behavior of young children between the ages of birth and five years. These laboratories, while serving both research and service purposes, were designed primarily to provide observation and participation with young children by students seeking professional careers as

teachers in a variety of early childhood education settings. These include public and private nursery schools, kindergartens, cooperative schools, Head Start and other government sponsored programs, and many newly developing day care programs. Students with advanced degrees seek administrative and consultant roles in addition to those of teaching young children (Kerckhoff, 1971).

In the fall of 1971, a new laboratory, the Family Laboratory, was added to these programs. It enrolled families and individuals representing a variety of ages and stages throughout the life cycle from infancy through older adulthood. Timely observations by both individual specialists in the field of child development, commissions, and national and regional conferences studying the state of the young child in the current decade indicate that children are basically separated from the rest of society in our culture, and that some of the failures of modern education might be attributed to this separation (Kerckhoff, 1971).

> . . . we have been guilty of trying to work with the child without including his family. We have tried to know him without knowing his mother, father, siblings, grandparents (Grisson, 1971).
>
> There is a belief that perhaps these failures can be somewhat modified by more integrated study and observation of young children 'on a continuum' in the developmental process, as they relate and interact with individuals at each stage of the life cycle.

> Also there is evidence that the so-called 'generation gap' is enhanced by lack of opportunities for individuals of different ages to be together at the same time in the same place (Kerckhoff, 1971).
>
> The young child has been removed from contact with basic life processes and from contact with a range of phenomena which would allow him to gain an understanding of the world in which he must live (Frazier, 1968).

The problem exists at all echelons of society; rich and poor, educated and uneducated. Children do not have ample opportunity to have meaningful contacts with adults and many are unable to even describe the occupation of their parents. Their lives evolve without being "in touch" with adults. When these children become adults, they turn off older people and consciously or unconsciously the gap widens (Peters, 1971).

Erik Erikson describes his view of the importance of the parent-child relationship.

> . . . I can think of life as progressively unfolding, with its directions essentially fixed in the first few years by what happens between the child and his parents (Coles, 1970).

National recognition was given to the importance of parental involvement in education during the highly publicized efforts in the early 1970s under President Richard M. Nixon's administration to pass a comprehensive child development bill.

> The bill builds in a major role for parents in the management and policy-making decisions . . . each prime sponsor must establish a Child Care Council (C.C.C.). . . . one half of whose composition shall be parents of children served by the center . . . (Report on Preschool Education, April 19, 1972).

The Family Laboratory was planned not only to involve parents, but to provide opportunities for young children to participate in activities and learning experiences with babies, school age children, adolescents, adults who are single, married, parents, and grandparents. Under supervised programming, opportunities were provided to allow for each age to interact with the other age groups represented. For example, specifically planned programming facilitated babies and toddlers joining the two and a half to five year olds; school age children and teen-agers joining nursery school children; and grandparents, parents, and other adults joining preschoolers and babies.

> It's natural for people of all ages to be together, they should be together and when they are brought together even in the cold world of deadlines . . . it's a pleasant enjoyable experience--and really 'no big thing.' It's only a 'big thing' if we don't do it--and it threatens to get bigger and bigger (Peters, 1971).

Subjects

The subjects for the Family Laboratory experimental project represented a core group of fifteen families

enrolled for the 1971-72 school year in the Purdue University Child Development Laboratory. Included in this core group of families were infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school age children, teen-agers, parents, and grandparents. In addition, serving the educational purposes of the laboratory were students from the introductory undergraduate course in child development (CDFL 210), participants from both the music and literature courses for young children (CDFL 414 and 416), student teachers in child development as well as in elementary education, graduate teaching assistants and an early childhood education student from Norway.

The families, a middle to high middle socio-economic group, comprised the following occupations: business administration, engineering, construction, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, ministry, preschool and elementary teaching, university counseling, accounting, a military officer, graduate students in chemistry and agricultural economics and professors in the areas of mathematics, forestry, agriculture and business.

Procedure

The program in the Family Laboratory was designed to promote the total growth of each individual in it. It was not concerned with any one specific area of growth such as cognitive, social, physical or emotional,

but was intended to facilitate the total being and his ability to function among the members of a family unit. Details such as this and to the purpose and structure of the Family Laboratory were given to the parents by the Director of the Child Development Laboratories prior to enrollment and regular communications were held both formally and informally to provide opportunity for questions and clarifications.

Equipment, room arrangement and structure were modified to include the many age levels and interest groups to be found in a family laboratory. Alterations were made both indoors and out as well as the addition of such new facilities as a lending library for parents.

The laboratory met from 2:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the project will be based upon scheduled parent conferences, planned student teacher conferences and informal interviews and conversations with parents, teaching assistants, student teachers, fellow teachers, and interested colleagues. Mid-year and end-of-the-year questionnaires will be sent to participating families in order to determine their reaction to the program, the activities, and their involvement within the program as well as to provide an

opportunity for them to submit written criticisms, suggestions, and recommendations for consideration for both this experimental laboratory project and future programs of a like nature.

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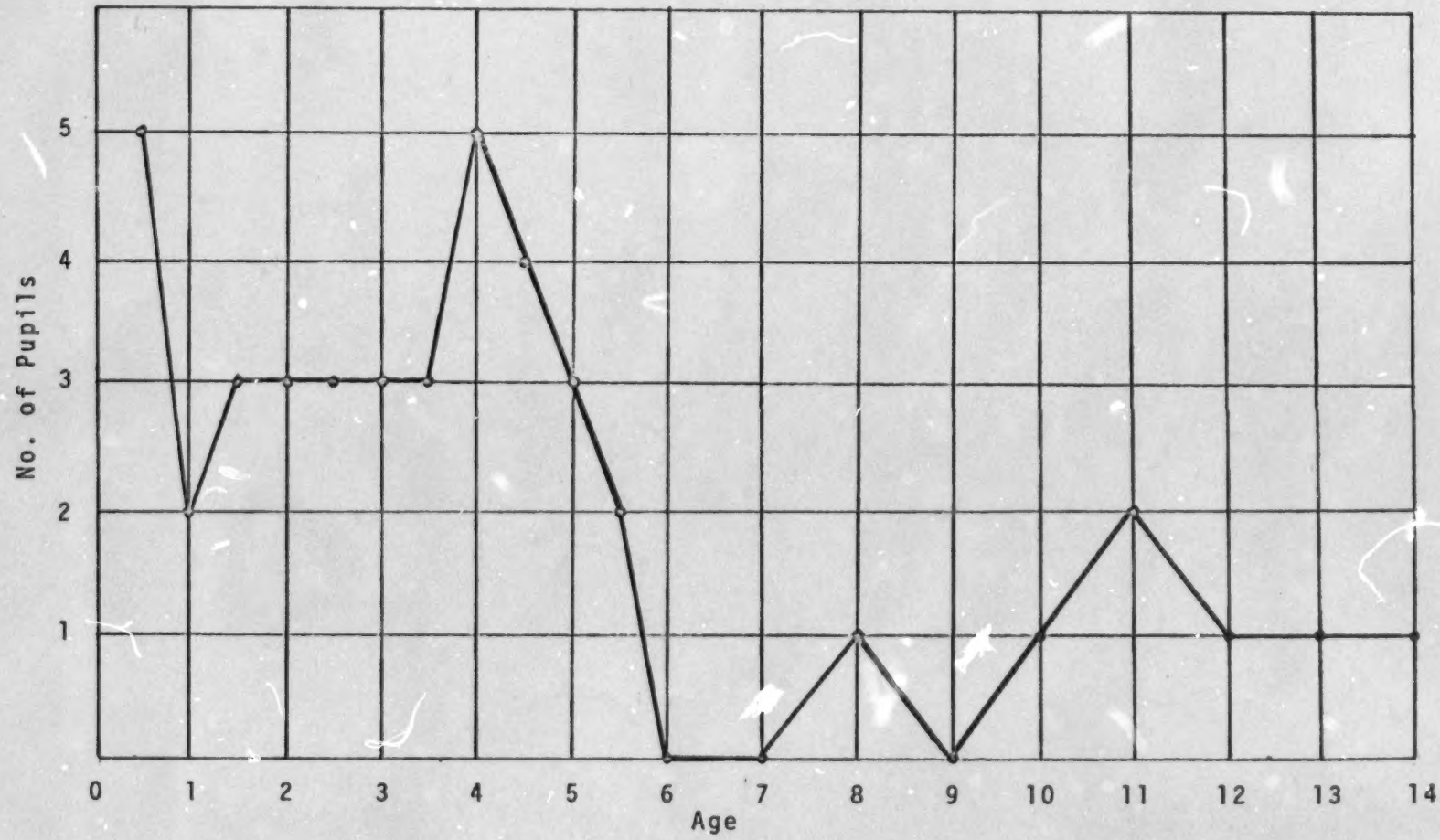
Appendix B

Age Distribution for Ages 0-14 Years



Appendix C

Official Letter of Acceptance into the Child Development Laboratories

June 1971

Dear Parents:

We are happy to welcome you to the Child Development Laboratories. Nursery School will begin the week of September 20th, and your child's teacher will notify you prior to that time about when you should bring your youngster to school for the first time.

Enclosed are forms which must be filled out before your child starts school. It is required that every child have a complete physical examination before he begins school. The physical examination card should be filled out by your physician and returned to the Department of Child Development and Family Life, Attention of Mrs. Kerckhoff. The form marked "for parents" is to be filled out by you in relation to your child's health, and also returned to the department.

The permission slips are to facilitate your child's participation in field trips and excursions that are part of the regular educational program. You will always be notified when such an event is planned for the group. Because we are a teacher-training and research laboratory also, we request permission for your child to participate in ongoing projects and studies that help our students learn more about children and the ways they grow and develop.

Soon after school begins your child's teacher will contact you about a parent meeting for all parents of children enrolled in her group. We hope you will be able to attend and learn about the program your youngster will be participating in this year.

Nursery School operates on the regular university calendar, and the children will not attend during regularly scheduled holidays, vacations, and examination weeks.

Please return your forms as soon as possible. We look forward to our association with you during the coming year.

Sincerely,

Director, Child Development Laboratories

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Note: Those families participating in the Family Laboratory will receive further information in September.

Appendix D

Family Laboratory Orientation Letter

September 9, 1971

Dear Mr. and Mrs. and family,

Welcome to the Family group of the Child Development Laboratories. It is hoped that participation will be both enjoyable and rewarding for you and your family.

The group will officially begin Monday, September 20. However, scheduling, plans and ideas should be discussed by all of us as a group. To this end, there will be a meeting on Thursday, September 23, at 8:00 p.m. in the East Nursery School. Because this is a family group we strongly urge both parents to attend this session.

To facilitate this planning, we need some additional information. Please list names, sex and birth dates of all your children on the enclosed form and return it to CDFL Building, Purdue University.

We are looking forward to seeing you and sharing ideas on September 23, at 8:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

Appendix E

Participation Suggestions from Parents

...Handy man, arts and crafts, group interaction

...Would like to lead a session with the child using a tape recorder. Also could help fix some of the toys.

...Outdoor activity-group interaction

...Basic embroidery on burlap; sewing on small machine; baking; cooking; reading stories; other crafts.

...Outdoor activities, carpentry, group singing, photography.

...Like music, singing, can play piano with one hand. Have taught 3 year olds in Sun. School and enjoy that age child. Like outdoor large muscle activity.

...Would like to go along on field trips.

...Like music, reading stories, will help plan field trips, will help where needed.

...Anything that you need done.

...?

...Photography, ? open to many ideas.

...Field trip driver, we have access to various filmstrips.

...Documentary movies of class.

...Builder-field trips. Background--aviation, electronics.

...Read - Bake - Be with the infants.

...Music

...Videotaping - putting together - interacting.

...Field trip, read, play games, interacting.

...Still photography, water colors, hammering. Can't play piano.

...Mr. Fix-it

...Story telling, general activities

...Willing to try whatever needs - no special talent.

...Bake; be with infants.

Appendix F

Newsletter No. 1 - March, 1972

FAMILY LAB NEWS

Vol. 1; No. 1 — PURDUE NURSERY SCHOOL, West Lafayette, Indiana — March, 1972

NEW FACES IN NURSERY SCHOOL THIS SEMESTER

We feel fortunate to have two new graduate teaching assistants this semester. Maretta Burgert joins us with a B.A. in psychology and sociology from the University of Kansas. She is working on a M.A. in cognitive development. Her interests are in language, bilingualism in children and early childhood education. She is planning to investigate research possibilities in France this coming summer.

Mike McDaniel is from La Porte, Indiana. He received his B.S. from Purdue University in psychology in 1971. He worked in the child development labs for two semesters while an undergraduate. He is now working on a masters degree in human development. His main area of interest is personality and social development of adolescents. He is also interested in development of creativity and intelligence.

Returning to us from last semester, and most welcomed we might add, is Linda Church. She was graduated in 1966 from the University of Connecticut with a B.S. in nursing. For four years she worked as a pediatric nurse on a preschool ward at Yale-New Haven Hospital in New Haven, Connecticut. She will complete a masters in child development in June. Her plans for the immediate future are indefinite--depending on the Lafayette job market. She and her husband Chris will be moving to England in the next few years.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

January 12, 1972--A son was born to Philip and Monica Braman. Monica was a student teacher in our group last semester. They have named him Christopher Arthur. He was 20 inches long and weighed in at 7 lbs. 4 oz. He now holds the distinction of being the newest and youngest member of Miss Diehl's infant group.

There are two seven-week and two fifteen-week student teachers in the Family Lab at this time. Sue Gutterman is a senior in CDFL and will be graduating in June. Her home is in Munster, Indiana, where her parents and brother live. She has no definite plans for next fall; however, this summer she will be traveling through Europe and Israel.

Jane Stewart is also a seven-week student who will be graduated in June. She has a double major in social welfare and CDFL. Her home is Delhi, New York. Plans for the future are indefinite.

Beverly Kraft is with us on Monday throughout the semester. She is an elementary education major from Portage, Indiana. Last semester she student taught in the third grade in Griffith, Indiana. June promises to be a big month for Bev with graduation and wedding bells. She hopes to teach in this area.

Joan Moser is an elementary education major from Crawfordsville. She has a second major in nursery-kindergarten. Next fall will be her last semester. She will student teach in Crawfordsville at that time. Joan plans to teach in the public schools and eventually develop her own nursery school. Her husband is a realator and they have three sons, Keven, Mark and Eric.

MARCH 21 DATE SET CREATIVES FOR PARENTS

The student teachers in the Family Lab would like to invite the parents to attend a session on creatives. There will be four centers where the parents can participate. There will also be recipes and instructions available. Mark the date now--March 21 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the East Nursery School

We have had two recipe requests from our potluck dinner last fall. Would the ladies who brought the pumpkin dessert and the Mexican type casserole in a deep dish be willing to share these recipes for the next newsletter?

WELCOME TO OUR NEW FAMILIES

Jerry and Ramona Emmons--son, Jerry.

Sam and Nancy Johnston--daughter, Heidi.

Anthony and Jackie Lewis--twins, Mathew and Josephine.

Willy and Joyce Woods--daughter, Stacy.

ADDRESS:

Dr. & Mrs. Dick Schubert
1211 King Street
Charlottesville,
Virginia 22902

FIELDTRIPS ENHANCE NURSERY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

David, Julie, Jana, Jeffrey S., Mrs. H., and Jane Stewart were guests of Mrs. Ports & her group on a trip downtown. The trip was made on city transportation much to the delight of other passengers. The bus let us off on the square and we walked to the Bank Building. We rode the elevator to the 9th floor where we visited the offices of Stuart Heade and Nick Deets' fathers.

On February 22 the Family Lab group went to Purdue Dairy Farm in connection with a unit on dairy foods. We saw the outdoor pens, cows being milked and the calves. We learned that milk is measured by the pound. The milk from the cows we saw goes to Indianapolis to the Borden Co. Heather did'nt like the smell. Jeff S. liked it fine. We think he would make a good farmer. Jeff L. liked the bus.

LIBRARY SHELF NOW AVAILABLE TO PARENTS

Starting this week there will be a lending library shelf available for Family Lab parents. It will contain books, pamphlets, magazines, and articles on a variety of topics. There will be a sign out sheet on or near the shelf. Please take only one item at a time for a maximum of one week.

HAPPY READING

VOLUNTEER

On Tuesdays this semester we have a foreign student in our midst. Tove Lie comes to us from Norway. She is spending time in our group to gain the hours of experience necessary for kindergarten certification in her home country.

Some times I feel that life has passed me by... do you ever feel that way, Charlie Brown?
No! I feel that it has knocked me down and walked over me!

HELP WANTED: Someone to organize an end of the year cookout for the Family Lab sometime in May.

KIDS KORNER

AT NURSERY SCHOOL I LIKE:

Julie likes painting with her feet.

David likes to put his feet in the water

Heather says it was cold when she washed her feet.

Jeffrey S. likes racing cars.

Sarah says the water is cold.

Heidi likes to paint.

Susie likes to put her feet in the water.

Amy likes to wash dishes.

Jana likes to paint with her feet.

Howard doesn't know what he likes to do.

Debbie Scheeres likes to play with the guinea pigs. (Did you know that Baby Lucy and Leroy became the proud parents of two males and one female last month?)

Laura Scheeres likes to do art.

Dan Scheeres likes to play in the sand

QUOTE:

The greatest educational dogma is also its greatest fallacy; the belief that what must be learned can necessary be taught.

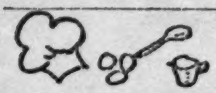
Sydney J. Harris

Appendix G

Newsletter No. 2 - April, 1972

FAMILY LAB NEWS

PURDUE NURSERY SCHOOL
Vol. 1; No. 2 West Lafayette, Indiana April, 1972



PUMPKIN PIE DESSERT SQUARES

1 pkg. yellow cake mix
1/2 c. butter or margarine, melted
1 egg

FILLING:
3 cups pumpkin pie mix (1 lb 14 oz can)
2 eggs
2/3 c. milk

TOPPING:
1 c. reserved cake mix
1/4 c. sugar
1 t. cinnamon
1/4 c. butter or margarine

Grease bottom only of 13 x 9 inch pan. Reserve 1 cup cake mix for topping. Combine remaining cake mix, butter & egg. Press into pan. Prepare Filling by combining all ingredients until smooth. Pour over crust. For Topping, combine all ingredients. Sprinkle over Filling. Bake at 350° for 45 to 50 min. until knife inserted near center comes out clean. If desired, serve with shipped topping. May be served warm.

Our thanks to Florence Weingram for sharing her recipe with us.

LENDING LIBRARY

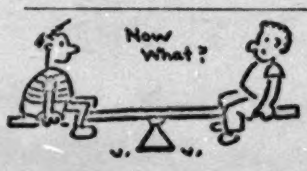
New additions are constantly being made to the Parent Lending Library which is located just outside the entrance to Nursery School East. Be sure to stop and browse awhile.

STUDENT TEACHERS AND PARTICIPANTS ENRICH NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our two seven-week student teachers, Jane Stewart and Sue Gutterman, are now participating in the kindergarten portion of their student teaching program. Bev Kraft and Joan Moser have been joined by Pat Kahl, a senior from Munster, Indiana. Pat is majoring in elementary education with a second major in child development. She will be with us for four weeks.

Pat chose teaching as a profession while she was still in high school. Her experiences with slow learners and summer recreational programs were so enjoyable that she decided teaching was the career for her. She completed her elementary student teaching last semester in the Elkart school system where she taught second grade in the Monger School.

The introductory course in child development (CDFL 210) gives enrolled students the option of participation experience with young children. The Family Lab has three people from this course this semester. Mike Harrell and Lisa Heller are in our group on Tuesday from 2 to 3 o'clock and Cheryl Hoy on Wednesday during the same hour.



GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE DISCUSSION DATE SET

An open discussion of effective guidance and discipline techniques for parents and teachers of preschool children will be held in the East Nursery School on Wednesday, May 3 from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served (as an added incentive for a good attendance!!)

SPECIAL VISITORS AND FIELDTRIPS

March may have come in like a lion but Spring came to our nursery school with a visit from Mrs. Flannigan and her friend Lambikin. The next day, March 21, a Purdue bus took us to the Barany Farm to visit Mrs. F. and Lambikin along with the other lambs, sheep and pony that live there. We watched Mrs. Flannigan feed the pony an apple which he consumed in one bite. Andy Strausbaugh kept repeating in amazement, "All Gone!! All Gone!!" To that we have to answer, "You just can't believe he ate the WHOLE thing!"

HELP WANTED: Someone to assist Marge Lewis plan our end of the year cookout for the latter part of May.

ASK ANY MOTHER

What's one of life's crueler
Generational gaps?
The too-young-for schooler
Who's too-old-for-naps.

--Betty Billipp

Appendix H

Newsletter No. 3 - May, 1972

FAMILY LAB NEWS

Vol. 1; No. 3 | PURDUE NURSERY SCHOOL, West Lafayette, Indiana | May, 1972

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

The week of May 14-20 has been proclaimed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children as the "Week of the Young Child." Mayor Dienhart and Mayor Riehle have issued proclamations announcing recognition of the week in West Lafayette and Lafayette. Locally, a variety of events will be taking place.

MON. MAY 15 ...
Children from the A.M. East Child Development Laboratory at PURDUE will be filmed for showing on WLFI-6 and 10:00 news.

TUES. MAY 16 ...
Mrs. Kerckhoff will be interviewed this afternoon for later replay on WASK.
Children in P.M. West and a few guests from P.M. East Family Lab will visit the offices of Dean Ogle and Dean Salen, School of Humanities, Social Science and Education.
At 4:30 p.m. Flo Kerckhoff and Dama Wilms will be guests on THE JANEY SPEICHER SHOW, WLFI-TV. Topic: Parenthood in our country today.

FRI. MAY 19 ...
Children from A.M. East will share a sack lunch with President Hansen on the mansion lawn.

SAT. MAY 20 ...
Children's Festival at Columbian Part, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
CHECK YOUR NEWSPAPER FOR NOTICES OF OTHER EVENTS!

FAMILY LAB END OF THE YEAR PICNIC TUESDAY, MAY 23

The Family Lab will close out the year with a picnic at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 23, on the Nursery School East Playground (if it rains--we'll go inside). We are asking each family to bring their own meat course (grills will be available), your own table service, and one dish to be shared potluck. Ice cream, coffee, and milk will be provided.
We may need a couple of extra grills. Please let Marge Lewis or Loretta Hatfield know if you have one to offer.
Ron Strausbaugh will show the films he took of the Family Lab earlier in the year.
Hopefully, the volleyball net will be up for those physically fit individuals who care to indulge!

FIELDTRIPS

We took advantage of the increasing number of nice days in late April and the month of May to take an interesting variety of fieldtrips.

April 21 ... Moon Walk to Purdue Horticulture Park. We even gathered some rock samples to bring back to Earth.
April 26 ... Nature walk in Happy Hollow Park. We sat on flat rocks and listened for birds. Julia insisted that we were not in Happy Hollow--no airplane and no toys!
May 3 ... Purdue Poultry Farm and did we learn a lot about chickens! We came back to nursery school and fired our own scrambled eggs. Those finger paintings that came home were made with colored beaten eggs, catsup, mustard, mayo & peanut butter!

WELCOME ABOARD

The two newest members of Isabelle's infant section of the lab are:
Billy Budde, sone of Wm. & Ginny Budde ...
and
Derek Ports, son of Ken & Dottie Ports.

FAMILY LAB PICNIC

___Sorry, we cannot attend. ___Yes, we will come.

___Number of adults attending. I will provide ...

___Number of children attending.

We (will)(will not) want to use the grills.

(beans) or
(salad) or
(other) specify

Signed_____

PLEASE CLIP AND RETURN BY WED. MAY 17!!!

Appendix I

Mid-Year Questionnaire Cover Letter and Questionnaire

Dear

The Family Group has been functioning for one full semester. This is the first time such a group has been tried at Purdue. It is time to evaluate what has been done and plan for the future.

Please help us by filling out and returning the enclosed questionnaire. We are asking your careful thought and honest opinions; they will influence future planning.

No names are needed on the questionnaire.

Signatures:

Please comment briefly on each topic

Group

1. What are your reactions to the age range?

2. Did you find the group size agreeable or disagreeable? Why?

3. How do you view the inclusion of older children (Good or bad; more or less)? Suggestions.

4. Is the 2:00 to 4:15 hour good or bad for you, for your child? Recommendations:

Parent Participation

1. What is your reaction to the amount of parent involvement?

2. Was the experience profitable (for you, for your child, for the group)?

3. Should the parent participation be required?

Appendix J

Family Lab Questionnaire

Please underline the term which best describes your feelings or reaction.

1. Being involved as a family in the program ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

2. The inclusion of elementary age and older children ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

3. The babies moving permanently to the Infant Lab ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

4. Toddler Tuesday ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

5. Parent lending library ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

6. General curriculum ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

7. Field trips ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

8. Newsletters ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable

9. Creative night for parents ...

   Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable
   Did not attend

10. Guidance and discipline discussion ...

    Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable
    Did not attend

11. Fall pot luck ...

    Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable
    Did not attend

12. End of year cook out ...

    Highly favorable Favorable Neutral Unfavorable
    Did not attend

13. Please comment on how you feel all family members could have been more beneficially involved.

14. Any other comments, pro or con, on the above or other related topics.

Appendix K

Interest Survey for Parent Meetings

I am particularly interested in your comments about parent meetings because this semester I will be having two or three discussion groups for the Family Lab parents as part of the requirements for a graduate course

Meetings

1. Do you prefer mornings, afternoons or evenings?

   Please circle time

Thursday	10:00 - 11:30 a.m.	(1)
Thursday	1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	(0)
Thursday	2:00 - 3:30 p.m.	(4)
Evenings	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.	(3)
	7:30 - 9:00 p.m.	(3)
	8:00 - 9:30 p.m.	(5)

2. Would on the premice sitter service be advantageous for afternoon meetings?

   Yes (9) No (1)

3. What were your reactions to the pot luck?

4. What topics would you be interested in discussing?

Interest Level			
High	Med	Low	
2	6	2	Sex education
9	4	0	Guidance and discipline
7	4	1	Creative activities
3	4	4	Working mothers
1	5	4	Racial awareness

Other suggestions:

1. Relations between family members--sibling rivalry, mother-son, father-daughter.
2. Early learning, reinforcement techniques, following directions.

Appendix L

Attendance Records for FLEP
(Core Children Only)
Fall, 1971

	Sept. 20 thru Oct. 13	Oct. 18 thru Nov. 10	Nov. 15 thru Dec. 8	Dec. 13 thru Jan. 12	Total	%
Colds	0	1	1	0	2	2.6
Contagious Disease	0	6	10	3	19	25.0
Exposure to Cont. Dis.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Precaution	0	0	0	5	5	6.5
Unknown	7	17	16	8	48	63.1
Out of town	0	0	0	1	1	1.3
Misc.	0	0	1	0	1	1.3
Total	7	24	28	17	76	99.8
Could have been present	180	165	180	135	660	Absenteeism 11.5

Appendix M

Attendance Records for FLEP
(Core Children Only)
Spring, 1971

	Feb. 7 thru Mar. 1	Mar. 6 thru Mar. 29	April 10 thru May 3	May 8 thru May 24	Total	%
Colds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contagious Diseases	1	6	3	0	10	15.6
Exposure to Cont. Dis.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Precaution	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	7	7	13	20	47	73.4
Out of town	0	0	1	0	1	1.5
Misc.	0	5	0	1	6	9.3
Total	8	18	17	21	64	98.8
Could have been present	161	180	180	135	656	Absenteeism 9.6

VITA

Loretta M. Hatfield

Born: Taylorville, Illinois, January 22, 1937

Married: October 7, 1956
Hustand--William; Children--Brigett (June 25, 1957)
Bret (June 16, 1959)

Educational Data:

1951-1955	Taylorville High School, Diploma Taylorville, Illinois
1955-1956	Eastern Illinois State College (Eastern Illinois University)
1956-1957	Southern Illinois University
1957-1958	Northern Illinois University
1966-1969	Purdue University, B.S. Degree (with Distinction) West Lafayette, Indiana Major: Early Childhood Education Minor: Art Education
1969-1970	University of Strasbourg, France, (audited French course)
1971-1972	Purdue University (Courses toward M.S.)
1972-1973	University of Strasbourg, France (Audited French course) Strasbourg, France, Visitation of various private preschool settings.
1974-1975	Purdue University, M.S. Degree West Lafayette, Indiana

Recognitions:

Omicron Nu - Professional Home Economics Honorary
Kappa Delta Pi - Educational Honorary

Teaching and Administrative Experiences:

Child Development Laboratories, Department of Child Development and Family Life, Purdue University

1974-1975 1971-1972	Graduate Instructor (including extensive supervision of student teachers)
1970-1971	Departmental Advisor for Nimitz Drive Nursery School
1970-1971 1968-1969	Instructor

Buckeye Village Nursery School, Columbus, Ohio

1964-1966	Head Teacher
1963-1964	Assistant Teacher

Professional Organizations:

NAEYC - National Association for the Education of Young Children

LAEYC - Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children

ACE - Association for Childhood Education

NCFR - National Council on Family Relations